

36. (AS UNAMENDED) An electronic mail managing system according to Claim 31, wherein the electronic managing apparatus further comprising:

emergency processing means for judging whether or not a preference process is necessary based on the received electronic mail and, if judged to be affirmative, executing access to the mail server.

37. (AS UNAMENDED) An electronic mail managing system according to Claim 31, wherein the electronic mail managing apparatus further comprising:

identifier memory means for storing therein identifiers of the plurality of terminal devices, and permitting access from the terminal device corresponding to the stored identifier.

38. (AS UNAMENDED) An electronic mail managing system according to Claim 31, wherein the electronic mail managing apparatus is a telephone.

REMARKS

In the final Office Action mailed January 3, 2002, claims 1, 3, and 5-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wagner (U.S. Patent No. 6,092,102) in view of Wang (U.S. Patent No. 5,757,891), claim 4 rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wagner in view of Wang, and further in view of Murakami et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,590,178), claims 9, 12-17, 20-24, 27-31, and 34-38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wagner in view of Wang and Fuller et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,224,156). The foregoing rejections are respectfully traversed.

In response to the subject final Action, claims 1, 7, 8, 9, 17, 24, and 31 are amended. Care has been exercised to avoid the introduction of new matter. A Version with Markings to Show Changes Made to the claims is included herewith.

Claims 1, 3-9, 12-17, 20-24, 27-31 and 34-38 are pending and rejected. Claims 1, 7, 8, 9, 17, 24, and 31 are independent claims. Claims 3-6 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 1; claims 12-16 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 9; claims 20-23 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 17; claims 27-30 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 24; and claims 34-38 depend from claim 31.

Wagner (U.S. Patent No. 6,092,102)

Wagner discloses a system and method for notifying users about information or events of a medical enterprise. In the Wagner apparatus, an enterprise 20 (shown in Figure 1) provides information 16 to a notification system 16, which notifies users 10, 12, and 14 about information 16, 17 or events 18 of the enterprise 20.

Wang (U.S. Patent No. 5,757,891)

As shown in Fig. 1 of Wang, the Wang apparatus relates to a telephone answering machine provided between a telephone and a phone line and having an e-mail receiving function. According to the disclosure of Wang, the telephone answering machine of the Wang apparatus merely receives the e-mail.

Murakami (U.S. patent No. 5,590,178)

Murakami relates to portable telephone accessing an electronic mail center and receiving electronic mail. The Examiner's assertions that the Murakami apparatus has "memory status means for storing each status of the electronic mail stored in the mail memory so as to correspond to each of a plurality of terminal devices" as in the present invention are respectfully traversed. A "memory status means", if existing in the Murakami apparatus, would be provided in the mail server of the Murakami apparatus.

Fuller (U.S. Patent No. 5,224,156)

Fuller discloses an apparatus for sending and receiving confidential facsimile messages, and which allows remote retrieval of the facsimile messages.

Combination of Wagner and Wang

The apparatus which would result from the combination of the Wagner apparatus and the Wang apparatus is a medical enterprise system including a telephone answering machine

provided between a telephone and a phone line and having an e-mail receiving function receiving the e-mail.

Combination of Wagner, Wang and Murakami

The apparatus which would result from the combination of the Wagner apparatus, the Wang apparatus and the Murakami apparatus is a medical enterprise system including a telephone answering machine provided between a telephone and a phone line and having an e-mail receiving function receiving the e-mail, including a portable telephone accessing an electronic mail center and receiving electronic mail.

Combination of Wagner, Wang and Fuller

The apparatus which would result from the combination of the Wagner apparatus, the Wang apparatus and the Fuller apparatus is a medical enterprise system including a telephone answering machine provided between a telephone and a phone line and having an e-mail receiving function receiving the e-mail, including sending and receiving confidential facsimile messages, and which allows remote retrieval of the facsimile messages.

Claim 1 is rejected under Wagner in view of Wang. The Examiner states that items 10, 12, and 14 of Wagner are terminals (like the present invention), but those items refer to users instead (col. 6, line 13). Transaction log 126 tracks transactions by user, not by terminal (like the present invention) (col. 9, lines 43-45). Communication channel 30 is for communicating with users, not terminals (col. 6, lines 32-34), and is channel-specific (col. 6, lines 45-65). Because Wagner is drafted in terms of a healthcare facility, where individual doctors, nurses, etc. all need different information, the user/terminal dichotomy grows larger. Information 16 refers to only one patient (col. 6, lines 18-20). Further, unlike the present invention, the system in Wagner identifies a particular user, not the specific medium utilized by a user (a terminal in the present invention) to access the transmission (col. 7, lines 38-61).

Claim 4 depends from claim 3/1. Murakami discloses deleting an e-mail using a terminal, but the telephone in Murakami is a separate unit from the terminal. Users in

Murakami are concurrently using the telephones to chat and the terminals to manage e-mail (claim 1; column 9, lines 4-38). In Murakami, the deletion is accomplished via the terminal. In the present invention, deletion is accomplished from the operative user interface, which, in an embodiment, is the telephone. The combination of references suggests using two separate devices to accomplish the task (a verbal communication device and an e-mail manager), whereas the present invention allows the user to accomplish the same tasks using only one device.

Claim 5 depends from claim 1. In Wang, the priority of a particular e-mail message is set by the e-mail server (col. 8, lines 37-43; Figs. 7 and 8), i.e., the e-mail server sets a code and the telephone reads the code and compares it to its internal "P-code" to determine priority. The code is part of the e-mail address in Wang (col. 9, lines 1-6). The apparatus suggested by the references simply compares the P-code to a code in the e-mail address, and therefore requires a dedicated e-mail server to set the appropriate codes. In addition, in the present invention, claim 5 provides for a terminal-to-mail manager-to-server priority, while Wang only provides for mail server-to-phone priority, i.e., receipt-only (col. 9, lines 9-10).

Claim 6 depends from claim 1. Claim 6 has a storage feature in the mail manager, while Wang has a storage feature in the mail server (col. 7, lines 39-41).

The arguments in regard to claim 1 also apply to claim 7, i.e., user versus terminal. The apparatus in Wang is directly connected to the mail server, whereas in claim 7, the method is carried out in a mail managing apparatus situated between the mail server and the terminal.

The argument used in reference to claim 1 also supports claims 9 and 17, i.e., user vs. terminal. The apparatus in Fuller does not appear to be able to accommodate multiple users without prior set up and sender notification (col. 5, line 38 through col. 6, line 10). In contrast, the present invention can be situated between a mail server and a computer with multiple users, for example, the present invention can be used by an average family having multiple users of one terminal, without notifying each and every sender of e-mail to every user of that terminal. In contrast, the combination of references would require notification to each and every sender that sends to each user of the computer terminal.

Claim 12 depends from claim 9. Further, in regard to the user versus terminal argument at claim 1 that also supports claim 12, in the present invention, one user can have multiple

preferences depending on the terminal (where there are multiple terminals per user). In Wagner, preferences follow the user, and to set up a system similar to the present invention, the principle e-mail management feature, i.e., the ability to read the same e-mail on multiple terminals, would not function.

Claim 16 depends from claim 9. Wang is limited to a system where phone calls take precedence over e-mails, and e-mails will not get through during a telephone call in progress (col. 6, line 22-26). In claim 16, there is no such limitation.

In the present application, each of the independent claims recites that "the electronic mail managing function is provided logically between the mail server and the plurality of terminal devices," and each of the independent claims recites the transmission of stored electronic mail.

Moreover, in the present invention, a plurality of terminals can obtain the electronic mail, which is sent to one user, in contrast to the Wagner apparatus.

Each of independent claims 1, 7, and 8 of the present application recites storing and reading electronic mail "which is sent to one user".

Each of independent claims 9, and 17 of the present application recites (using the recitation of claim 9 as an example) receiving from the mail server an electronic mail addressed "to one predetermined address" and "the electronic mail managing apparatus is capable of communicating with a plurality of terminal devices, and comprising a transmitting unit transmitting the electronic mail stored in the mail memory unit and received thereof from the mail server to one of the plurality of terminal devices in response to an access made by one of the plurality of terminal devices, wherein the electronic mail managing apparatus is provided logically between the mail server and the plurality of terminal devices, and wherein the electronic mail managing apparatus integratedly manages the electronic mail based on the electronic mail status corresponding to each of the terminal devices".

In addition, each of independent claims 24 and 31 recites (using the recitation of claim 24 as an example) "receiving from the mail server an electronic mail addressed "to one predetermined address" and "transmitting the electronic mail stored in the memory unit and received thereof from the mail server to one of the plurality of terminal devices in response to an access made by said one of the plurality of terminal devices, wherein the electronic mail management is provided logically between the mail server and the plurality of terminal devices

and wherein the electronic mail management integratedly manages the electronic mail based on the electronic mail status corresponding to each of the terminal devices”.

The above-mentioned dependent claims recite patentably distinguishing features of their own. For example, claim 10 recites “mail status memory means for storing each status of the electronic mail stored in the mail memory unit so as to correspond to each of the plurality of the terminal devices”, a benefit of which is that the present invention is that electronic mail can be integratively managed by referring to a mail status memory.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejections is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to enter the foregoing claim amendments because same clarify the patentably distinguishing features of the present invention over the foregoing references relied upon.

If there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

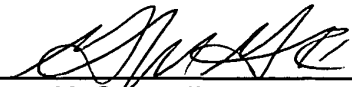
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If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please AMEND the following claims 1, 7, 8, 9, 17, 24, and 31:

1. (THREE TIMES AMENDED) A telephone with an electronic mail managing function, said telephone capable of connecting with at least a mail server and a plurality of terminal devices, said telephone comprising:
 - access means for accessing to the mail server;
 - a mail memory for storing an electronic mail which is sent to one user downloaded from the mail server through the access means;
 - a mail status memory for storing each status of the electronic mail stored in the mail memory so as to correspond to each of the terminal devices, wherein said status memory means stores whether or not the electronic mail is down-loaded to each of the terminal devices; and
 - transmission means for transmitting the electronic mail stored in the mail memory to one of the terminal devices, wherein the electronic mail managing function is provided logically between the mail server and the plurality of terminal devices, and wherein the electronic mail managing function integrately manages the electronic mail based on the status of the electronic mail corresponding to each of the terminal devices.
3. (AS TWICE AMENDED) A telephone with an electronic mail managing function according to Claim 1, said telephone further comprising:
 - a process table for storing a process to be applied to the electronic mail after the electronic mail is down-loaded to each of the terminal devices.
4. (AS ONCE AMENDED) A telephone with an electronic mail managing function according to Claim 3, said process to be applied to the electronic mail includes deleting the electronic mail and keeping the electronic mail.
5. (AS UNAMENDED) A telephone with an electronic mail managing function according to Claim 1, said telephone further comprising:
 - emergency process means for judging whether or not a priority process is necessary

based on the electronic mail received from each of the terminal devices and for executing an access to the mail server when the priority process is executed.

6. (AS ONCE AMENDED) A telephone with an electronic mail managing function according to Claim 1, said telephone further comprising:

an identifier memory for storing an identifier of a terminal device to be connected, permits an access from the terminal device in case that the identifier coincides with the stored identifier.

7. (THREE TIMES AMENDED) A mail managing method in a mail managing apparatus capable of transmitting/receiving mail data to/from at least a mail server and a plurality of terminal devices, said method comprising:

a reading process of reading mail which is sent to one user stored in the mail server;

a storing process of storing the mail read in the reading process ;

a display process of displaying a status of the mail stored in the storing process for each of the terminal devices, wherein said status includes whether or not the electronic mail is downloaded to each of the terminal devices; and

a transmission process of transmitting the mail stored in the storing process to one of the terminal devices, wherein the mail managing apparatus is provided logically between the mail server and the plurality of terminal devices, and wherein the mail managing method integrally manages the mail based on a status of the mail corresponding to each of the terminal devices.

8. (THREE TIMES AMENDED) A storage medium storing a program used for a mail managing apparatus capable of transmitting/receiving mail data to/from at least a mail server and a plurality of terminal devices, said program comprising:

a reading process of reading a mail which is sent to one user stored in the mail server;

a storing process of storing the mail read in the reading process;

a display process of displaying a status of the mail stored in the storing process for each of the terminal devices, wherein said status includes whether or not the electronic mail is downloaded to each of the terminal devices; and

a transmission process of transmitting the mail stored in the storing process to one of

the terminal devices, wherein the mail managing apparatus is provided logically between the mail server and the plurality of terminal devices, and wherein the mail managing apparatus integrately manages the mail server based on the status of the mail corresponding to each of the terminal devices.

9. (THREE TIMES AMENDED) An electronic mail managing apparatus capable of communicating with a mail server which stores therein an electronic mail sent to an address, comprising:

a receiving unit receiving from the mail server an electronic mail addressed to [a] one predetermined address; and

a mail memory unit storing the received electronic mail;

[a] mail status memory means for storing each status of the electronic mail stored in the mail memory unit so as to correspond to each of the plurality of the terminal devices, wherein the each status of the mail status memory means indicates whether or not the electronic mail received by the electronic mail managing apparatus for each terminal device has been transmitted to the terminal device; and

wherein the electronic mail managing apparatus is capable of communicating with a plurality of terminal devices, and comprising a transmitting unit transmitting the electronic mail stored in the mail memory unit and received thereof from the mail server to one of the plurality of terminal devices in response to an access made by one of the plurality of terminal devices, wherein the electronic mail managing apparatus is provided logically between the mail server and the plurality of terminal devices, and wherein the electronic mail managing apparatus integrately manages the electronic mail based on the electronic mail status corresponding to each of the terminal devices.

12. (AS ONCE AMENDED) An electronic mail managing apparatus according to Claim 9 further comprising:

process specifying means for specifying, for each terminal device, how the electronic mail transmitted to the terminal device should be processed.

13. (AS UNAMENDED) An electronic mail managing apparatus according to Claim 12 further comprising:

means for receiving the electronic mail from each terminal device; and
means for transmitting the received electronic mail to the mail server.

14. (AS UNAMENDED) An electronic mail managing apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein said electronic managing apparatus is emergency processing means for judging whether or not a preference process is necessary based on the received electronic mail and, if judged to be affirmative, executing access to the mail server.

15. (AS UNAMENDED) An electronic mail managing apparatus according to Claim 14 further comprising:

identifier memory means for storing therein identifiers of the plurality of terminal devices, and permitting access from the terminal device corresponding to the stored identifier.

16. (AS UNAMENDED) An electronic mail managing apparatus according to Claim 9 wherein the electronic mail managing apparatus is provided in a telephone.

17. (THREE TIMES AMENDED) An electronic mail managing method in an electronic mail managing apparatus capable of communicating with a mail server which stores therein an electronic mail sent to an address, comprising:

receiving from the mail server an electronic mail addressed to [a] one predetermined address;

storing the received electronic mail in a memory unit;

storing in a status memory unit each status of the electronic mail stored in the mail memory unit so as to correspond to each of the plurality of the terminal devices, wherein each status of the status memory unit indicates whether or not the electronic mail received by the electronic mail managing apparatus for each terminal devices has been transmitted to the associated terminal device; and

wherein the electronic mail managing apparatus is capable of communicating with a plurality of terminal devices, and transmitting the electronic mail stored in the mail memory unit and received thereof from the mail server to one of the plurality of terminal devices in response to an access made by said terminal device, wherein the electronic mail managing apparatus is

provided logically between the mail server and the plurality of terminal devices, and wherein the electronic mail managing method integrately manages the electronic mail based on the electronic mail status corresponding to each of the terminal devices.

20. (AS UNAMENDED) An electronic mail managing method according to Claim 17 further comprising:

processing the received electronic mail based on a process specifying information specifying for each terminal device how the electronic mail transmitted to the respective terminal devices should be processed.

21. (AS UNAMENDED) An electronic mail managing method according to Claim 17 further comprising:

receiving the electronic mail from each terminal device;
and
transmitting the received electronic mail to the mail server.

22. (AS UNAMENDED) An electronic mail managing method according to Claim 21 further comprising:

judging whether or not a preference process is necessary based on the received electronic mail; and
executing access to the mail server, if judged to be affirmative.

23. (AS UNAMENDED) An electronic mail managing method according to Claim 17 further comprising:

permitting access from the terminal device corresponding to a stored identifier, based on the information of an identifier memory unit which stores therein identifiers of the plurality of terminal devices.

24. (THREE TIMES AMENDED) A storage medium storing a program executing an electronic mail management in an information processing apparatus capable of communicating with a plurality of terminal devices, the program comprising:

receiving an electronic mail sent to [a] one predetermined address from a mail server

which stores therein the electronic mail addressed to an address;

storing the received electronic mail in a memory unit;

storing in a status memory unit each status of the electronic mail stored in the mail memory unit so as to correspond to each of the plurality of the terminal devices, wherein each status indicates whether or not the electronic mail received by the electronic [electronic] mail management for each terminal devices has been transmitted to the associated terminal device; and

transmitting the electronic mail stored in the memory unit and received thereof from the mail server to one of the plurality of terminal devices in response to an access made by said one of the plurality of terminal devices, wherein the electronic mail management is provided logically between the mail server and the plurality of terminal devices and wherein the electronic mail management integrately manages the electronic mail based on the electronic mail status corresponding to each of the terminal devices.

27. (AS UNAMENDED) A program of the storage medium according to Claim 24 further comprising:

processing the received electronic mail based on a process specifying information specifying for each terminal device how the electronic mail transmitted to the terminal device should be processed.

28. (AS UNAMENDED) A program of the storage medium according to Claim 24 further comprising:

receiving the electronic mail from each terminal device;

and

transmitting the received electronic mail to the mail server.

29. (AS UNAMENDED) A program of the storage medium according to Claim 28 further comprising:

judging whether or not a preference process is necessary based on the received electronic mail; and

executing access to the mail server, if judged to be affirmative.

30. (AS UNAMENDED) A program of the storage medium according to Claim 24 further comprising:

permitting access from the terminal device corresponding to a stored identifier, based on the information of an identifier memory unit which stores therein identifiers of the plurality of terminal devices.

31. (THREE TIMES AMENDED) An electronic mail managing system comprising:
an electronic mail managing apparatus capable of communicating with a mail server which stores therein an electronic mail sent to an address; and

a plurality of terminal devices capable of communicating with the electronic mail managing apparatus; and

wherein the electronic mail managing apparatus comprising:

a receiving unit receiving from the mail server an electronic mail addressed to [a] one predetermined address;

a mail memory unit storing therein the received electronic mail;

mail status memory means for storing each status of the electronic mail stored in the mail memory unit so as to correspond to each of the plurality of the terminal devices, wherein each status of the mail status memory unit indicates whether or not the electronic mail received by the electronic mail managing apparatus for each terminal device has been transmitted to the associated terminal device; and

a transmitting unit transmitting the electronic mail stored in the mail memory unit and received thereof from the mail server to one of the plurality of terminal devices in response to an access made by said terminal device, wherein the electronic mail managing apparatus is provided logically between the mail server and the plurality of terminal devices and wherein the electronic mail management apparatus integrately manages the electronic mail based on the electronic mail status corresponding to each of the terminal devices.

34. (AS UNAMENDED) An electronic mail managing system according to Claim 31, wherein the electronic mail managing apparatus further comprising:

process specifying means for specifying, for each terminal device, how the electronic mail transmitted to the respective terminal devices should be processed.

35. (AS UNAMENDED) An electronic mail managing system according to Claim 31, wherein the electronic mail managing apparatus further comprising:
means for receiving the electronic mail from each terminal device; and
means for transmitting the received electronic mail to the mail server.

36. (AS UNAMENDED) An electronic mail managing system according to Claim 31, wherein the electronic managing apparatus further comprising:
emergency processing means for judging whether or not a preference process is necessary based on the received electronic mail and, if judged to be affirmative, executing access to the mail server.

37. (AS UNAMENDED) An electronic mail managing system according to Claim 31, wherein the electronic mail managing apparatus further comprising:
identifier memory means for storing therein identifiers of the plurality of terminal devices, and permitting access from the terminal device corresponding to the stored identifier.

38. (AS UNAMENDED) An electronic mail managing system according to Claim 31, wherein the electronic mail managing apparatus is a telephone.